

ULYSSES ABOVE THE SUN'S SOUTH POLE

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Ulysses is the first spacecraft to survey fields and particles above the sun's polar regions. Previously, spacecraft had been restricted to a narrow band of latitudes near the solar equator. Ulysses was launched in October 1990 toward an encounter with Jupiter whose gravity field was exploited to rotate the Keplerian ellipse to a high inclination of 80.2° . The spacecraft reached the sun's south polar region, defined as 70° latitude and above, between June and November 1994. The complement of experiments carried on board the spacecraft has returned a set of comprehensive measurements of the solar wind, the solar magnetic field, galactic and anomalous cosmic rays, solar-interplanetary energetic particles, dust, hydromagnetic waves and plasma waves. General features of the mission, the spacecraft, the trajectory and the investigations will be described to serve as an introduction to the companion scientific presentations of the first results from above the sun's pole.

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